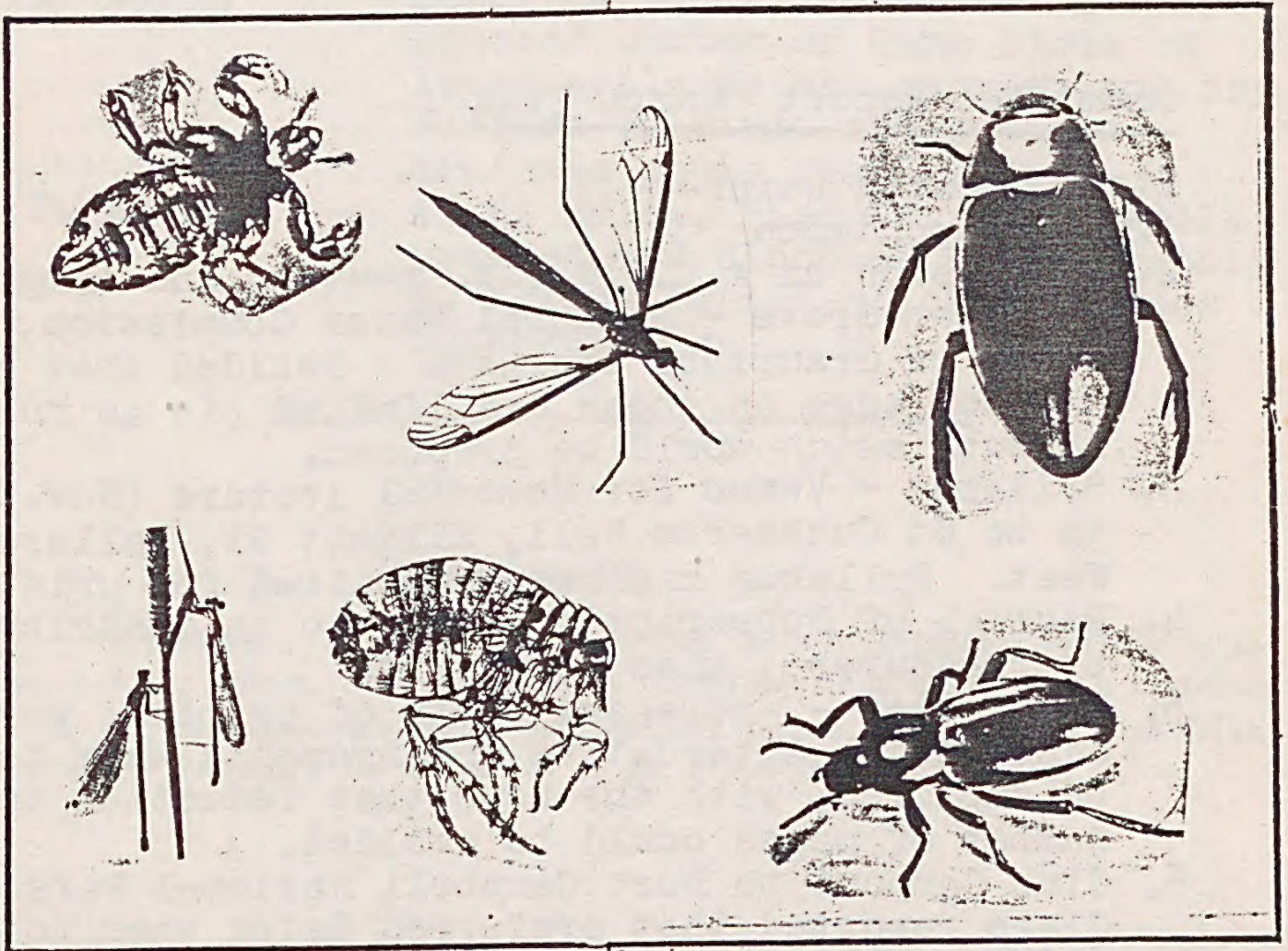


APRIL 1989

Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat *Incorporated.*

EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

- Meeting : April 7th. Insects and Management of Natural Reserves.
Mr. P. Muller.
- Meeting : May 5th. 'Fungi' Mr.G.Cheer.
- Excursion : April 9th. (Half-day) Haddon/Linton Railway Reserve.
Mr. B.Harrison.
- Excursion : May 7th. Piggoreet, Cape Clear. F.Willimson & A.Morrison.



President;	Dr.F.Harrap	Ph. 053 301651
Vice Pres.	Miss H.Burgess	312210
Secretary:	Mr.G.Binns	332282
Treasurer:	Mrs.F.Williamson	327631
Editor:	Mr.A.Barlow	413378

Meetings as specified are held at the School of Mines and Industries, Lydlard Street Sth., Art Building, commencing at 7.30 p.m. EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMENCE FROM CROCKERS, cnr. STURT AND ARMSTRONG STS., BALLARAT, at 9.30 a.m. for FULL DAY OUTINGS OR AT 1.30 p.m. for HALF DAY*

For Your Diary

April 9th. Sunday Half-day Excursion to explore the reserve along the discontinued Haddon/Linton railway line. The leader will be Brett Harrison.

April 15th. Bendigo F.N.C. visiting Ballarat. Afternoon excursion to Lal Lal. Meet at the Wildlife Park, Russel St. at 1-30p.m.

April 19th. Committee meeting. Please note change of venue to 1112 Ligar St. 8p.m.

May 27th. R.A.O.U. Scientific Day, Maribyrnong. Nine papers on Wader Studies. Registration \$35 includes refreshments and lunch. Details available from from Secretary Greg.

Committee Report March 21st

Items treated were:-

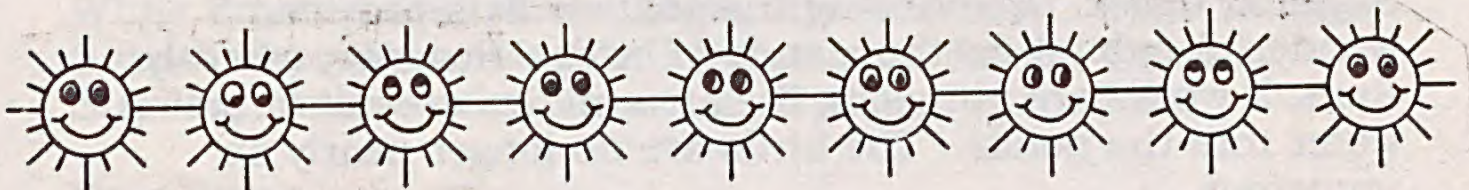
1. Correspondence
 2. Discussion on W.V.F.N.C.A. meeting and campout at Ocean Grove - Re Rural Water Commission, Study of Grampians Storages - decided that as knowledge on these was limited (ie in fnch.) no submission would be prepared.
 3. Syllabus - Venue for Memorial lecture (Nov.) to be St Cuthberts Hall, Elliott St, Ballarat West. Syllabus has been submitted for printing
 4. Renewal of Subscription forms to be distributed by Treasurer, when necessary.
 5. Newsletter - Increased costs of printing were discussed. Alternative arrangements were to be explored, with the hope that reduction in number of pages could be avoided.
 6. Club Campout to Port Campbell National Park. Clare reported that preferred dates were not available at Girl Guides Camp, Sherwood River. A weekend in May to be booked.
-

Reports - March Meeting.

- K. Hammond. - Lorrikeets numerous in Wendouree until early February, now scarce.
- H. Burgess. - Spinebills and Grey Fantail in Blackhill Gardens.
- A. Morrison. - Large Raptor observed at Eastern approaches to Ballarat. Little Eagle or Square Tailed Kite.
- L. Fink. - Noted that Anchor Plant seedlings were available for adoption? from Ian Higgins of Yandoit.
Expressed concern over advertising and articles about 'Bush Food', referring to protected species.
New discovery of Aboriginal Painted markings in the Mt. Cole area.
- G. Binns - Reported Summer Waterbird Surveys limited number of Game Birds on local wetlands and many swamps dry
Numbers of birds observed on drainage ponds near Mildura.
- F. Harrap - At Mt Helen, Pied Currawong still present and flock of approximately 50 Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoos observed.
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NEW PUBLICATION

"Wildflowers of Bendigo", compiled as a Bicentennial Project by the Bendigo F.N.C., shows, in colour, many wildflowers found in our own district. It is a well prepared and useful publication. Copies are available from Helen Burgess or the Secretary for the price of \$5. First in, first served!



Point Cook Excursion - Sunday March 5th 1989

On Sunday March 5th a convoy of cars left Crocker's corner and drove to Point Cook Metropolitan Park for a very pleasant day. It was a welcome break in a long, very hot spell. We stopped briefly to look at some wading birds a fair way from the road on the RAAF lake, but then drove to a better spot - a specially built bird hide near Spectacle Lake. We stayed here for quite a long time as the adults were finding a lot of birds. There were five of us kids and we went outside to talk. There was a large patch of weeds with things on them like baby cucumbers. We picked the ripe ones and squirted them. Going back to the cars we found a bee hive low down in a tree hollow, quite close to the path.

Next we drove to a picnic area for lunch. There was a very big spider on the toilet door. We had a pleasant spot for lunch with tables and shade. The people were: five Dalmans, four Gregurkes, Mr and Mrs Binns, Mr and Mrs Fink, Mrs Williamson, Miss Williamson, Mrs Rotheram, Miss Burgess and Mrs Barlow.

After lunch we had a look around the homestead and the grounds. We didn't wait for the adults to come. There were horse stables, (including a bed with a model of a stable hand sleeping in it), chooks, rabbits in cages, a dairy, wagons and carts, a tool shed and other outside buildings. Two of the horses, Flash and Sonny, are famous because they were part of the C.U.B. team. We fed them.

A man talked to the adults about the property and homestead. The homestead was built in 1852 by Alexander Irvine. Thomas Chirnside bought it in March 1852. He and his brother Andrew held large land holdings in the area and were very well known and respected pastoral families. The brothers were heavily involved in horse racing. In 1873 the Chirnside brothers began to construct the mansion called Werribee Park and four years later it was completed. The Point Cook homestead became much less important. In 1920 it was sold to Sydney Dalrymple who built the jetty. Dalrymple sold the northern part of the land to Cheetham Salt Pty. Ltd. for salt recovery from the lagoons around the mouth of Skeleton Creek. Before long the shallow flats provided a wonderful habitat for thousands of birds. However, recently, the salt works are not using the area and so are not pumping water into the ponds. The birds are no longer nearly so numerous.

Other people bought the homestead and lived in it for varying periods of time but it gradually fell into disrepair and vandals damaged it. In 1978 the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works acquired the property, appointed a live-in caretaker and began restoration and repair. Two rooms of the bluestone house are now open to the public and contain historic relics and displays, maps, articles and a video (not working for us).

It is of interest that such a quiet rural area is really so close to Melbourne. It is a place where visitors do not need to travel far to be in a peaceful place to watch many different birds. Of course it is also a safe place for the birds. It is only about 10 Km from the city but is 3 Km from the nearest house.

After we looked at the home the adults went for a walk along the beach to the actual Pt. Cook and saw a lot of birds. Us kids went the other way along the beach and found crabs and shells. We fixed up some guards over little trees. We met to share afternoon tea then left after a very relaxing, pleasant day.

Allison, Heather and Melinda Dalman

Point Cook - bird list 5th March 1989

Shore birds:

Silver Gull, Pacific Gull, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Red-necked Stint, Greenshank, Bar-tailed Godwit, Golden Plover, Curlew Sandpiper, Pied Stilt, White-faced Heron, Straw-necked Ibis, White Ibis, Masked Plover, Yellow Spoonbill, Common Tern, Crested Tern.

Water birds:

Grey Teal, Black Duck, Shoveller, Hoary-headed Grebe, Little Grebe, Little Pied Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Pied Cormorant, Pelican.

Others:

White Fronted Chat, Little Eagle, Brown Falcon, Willie Wagtail, Superb Blue Wren, Magpie, Magpie Lark, Raven, Sparrow, Starling, Yellow-tailed Thornbill, Spotted Turtledove.

Greg Binns

ACROSS

1 - Young Conger Eel (6) 5 Citrus fruit (6) 10 Donkeys (5) 11 Snakes and eels do this dance (5) 12 -----(s) Grinder or Restless Fly-catcher (7) 13 tment (5) 15 Mathematical Ophidia (5) Rum, Whisky and Ghosts (7) 20 Very early elephant (7) 22 Its beak holds more than its belly can! (7) 24 These are cold sounding hot stuff (7) 26 Grape (3) 27 Raptor's claw (5) 30 Star shaped flower (5) 32 Little Raptors (7) 33 Little eel (5) 34 Floral spike (5) 35 Golfers vegies? (6) 36 Alba, Garzetta or Intermedida? (Plural) (6)

DOWN

2 Bird - Genus Turdus (5) 3 Civet-cat (5) 4 Origins of water (7) 5 N.American marsupial mammal (Australian Phalanger) (7) 6 Per ardua ad ----- (What a heavenly clue!) (5) 12 What 12 Ac.does (5) 9 A Carbohydrate stiffener (6) 14 Giddiness (7) 16 Dermal depression (6) 19 Cha (3) 21 Samara is the seed of this tree (3) 22 Pelagic Sea-bird (6) 23 Lumps of gold (7) 24 Guinea pepper (7) 25 Fruits do when drying out (6) 28 Life depends on it - so we are told (5) 29 Ganglionic organ - not necessarily cheek! (5) 30 Rich family name. Did much for early conservation in U.S.A.(5) 31 Brown or Rainbow? (5)



Members Night March 3rd.

March 3rd was members night and again a wide variety of places visited by members was seen.

John Gregurk went to Douglas Hot Springs south of Darwin, we saw a Spotted Bower Bird's Bower, then to W.A. to the great quartz reef, one of the many Walls of China, the Hammersly ranges Nat. Park, fortresque River Gorge, Danggali Gorge, the hole Murchison River, Calothamnus, Black Gins, a relation of the Grasstree.

Lyndsay Fink went up the Strezlecki Track to Sturt National Park, there were many wildflowers out the Broom Rape being a very odd and uncommon plant (*OROBANCHE australiana*). Also the Lake Mungo area.

Harvey Hooper tripped to N.P.'s. in S.A. and showed a Lowan's Nest, Cassias, Callitris. and Pink Cockatoos were among the most interesting.

Helen Burgess went on the mail run from Alice Springs and saw many wildflowers, then to Chambers Pillar, Dragon Lizard, waddy Bush and Dalhousie were some of her slides.

Peter Dalman was flooded in Ballarat, went to the Exhibition at night, and then to Expo.

Florence Williamson saw a dragon lizard also and the Stockmans Hall of Fame in Queensland.

Ken Hammond went the longest trip, to England and showed us Meres, Keswick, Derwent Waters, Rob Roy McGregor's Grave, a Chaffinch, Lake Katrine and many others of interest.

Frank Harrap visited Lord Howe Island and showed Volcanic Mts Mt Gower in cloud, Redtailed Tropic Birds, Waders, Black Ducks, Masked Gannets and other views. Lord Howe Is. has a population of 300.

Greg Binns saw a bull Fur Seal at Peterborough, Peregrine falcon, some very large eggs (prob Rocs) and other slides of interest.

It was a very interesting and educational night and was enjoyed by all.

L.F.

Terminal Trivia.

Many insects have three forms, e.g. caterpillar, chrysalys and butterfly. The insect *Phylloxera quercus* has twenty-one!